

**Jessie White**

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**From:** Jim Scholl [jim\_scholl@dot.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 06, 2007 3:44 PM  
**To:** 'Jessie White'  
**Subject:** FW: Support for Juneau Road Access

Please log in. Thanks!

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**From:** Andrea and Mike Story [mailto:andimike@ak.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 06, 2007 2:46 PM  
**To:** DOT\_STIP@dot.state.ak.us  
**Subject:** Support for Juneau Road Access

Dear Department of Transportation, for the State of Alaska,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan. I am writing in support of planning and providing improved road access for Southeast Alaska, in particular, Juneau road access from and to the Capital City, which also includes shorter ferry service routes.

I am writing to express my support for continued work and funding for improved road access in Southeast Alaska. I believe this is an issue that is of utmost importance to Juneau and the rest of our state. I believe Juneau needs a combination of good road access and ferry service. To ignore, or not improve one or the other is not good for access to Juneau, especially for people of limited financial resources. I would hope that our state can be planning for both road access and ferry service, as outlined in the current plan.

One of the main points that many people forget is the high cost of transportation for airline travel as well as ferry outside of and to Juneau. Many Southeast residents can not afford to visit their family or take vacations. Even though it is a long road trip, it is affordable. Residents could have the ability to visit their families or other places outside of Juneau, whether it be in Anchorage or other points in the state or down south or Canada. And the same for their family members who can not afford to fly to Juneau. They could drive to visit them. Isolation would not be such a negative factor for Juneau. It would allow for families to take a quick trip out of Juneau at a reasonable cost.

Not only is the cost high to traveling residents but the current situation is of high cost to the State of Alaska. Each year the state is providing ferry subsidies, needing to look at a plan for providing funds for improving an elderly fleet, and providing funds for dealing with the fast ferry mechanical problems caused by operating in heavy seas. Road service requires an upfront cost, but results in long lasting gains and opens doors to access to other parts of the area around Juneau and up north.

Many people struggle with environmental issues. I know this road will be done with the best tools and knowledge of the environment. It is a more costly project as a result of that, but that is what Alaskans would want. I like to drive out the road now, and I am appreciative that I have road access to that land. Environmentally, it is doing well. Eagle Beach and all the area north of town on the road are beautiful and I am glad my family can drive out and see it. We do not have a boat. Many people can not afford a boat. I think it would allow more people to see the area, who will never see the area, unless there is road access. I think there is plenty of land for animals to move inward but more importantly, to coexist around the same spots, as we do now at Bridget Point and Eagle Beach.

I would like the easier access to neighbors and back country up north. I do believe it would be of economic gain for all of Southeast. I am hopeful that we will retain our beautiful town as the capital of Alaska, but I believe we need the road more the ever, to keep the capital in Juneau. But if the Capital is moved, I believe it is just as important to have economic access and ways to move goods between our fellow Alaskans up north, Canada and Southeast and the lower 48.

4/6/2007

I also believe that the committee that works to retain the capital in Juneau, is being honest with us, in reporting that state residents would like road access to their capital. My mother-in-law lives in Soldotna and took a road/ferry trip to Juneau this past summer. It would be more cost efficient and timely for her to do this, if she could take a short ferry shuttle and then drive the remaining road to Juneau.

The cost of providing transportation to a city and the cost of living in that city has an extremely high correlation. It is extremely important to the health and viability of any community. I believe a combination of road and ferry service is appropriate for the State of Alaska to plan for. I believe Juneau will still retain it's environmental standards and be a more affordable place to live.

Thank you for planning for reliable, affordable and adequate road and ferry service in Southeast Alaska and for the rest of our state. Please continue to make this a reality for Juneau and Southeast Alaska.

Sincerely,  
Andrea Story, Alaskan resident for 20 years